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ABSTRACT

Writing 125 is a 13-week course that all first-year students at Wellesley College (Massachusetts) are required to take. One instructor teaches a section of it called "Law in Contemporary Society" which centers writing and reading activities around legal issues, namely "Roe v. Wade" and "Webster v. Cruzan." As an essential part of the class, students routinely meet in groups of 3 to read and edit each other's first versions of formal writing assignments. After they turn in their essays, the class as a whole then critique anonymous student papers, pointing out strengths and weaknesses. As part of this process, they spend the last 20 minutes of class on New Daedalus Write (the word processing component of the Daedalus software program). The instructor also requires students to write exchanges on the Daedalus word processing program after particularly difficult reading assignments. Integrating technology, particularly a mix of e-mail (for distributing homework assignments, etc.) and programs like Daedalus that facilitate exchange between students, enriches the writing classroom and maximizes the instructor's time and energy. (Contains 23 pages of classroom materials and excerpts from classroom computer communications, including a class assignment, a student's book review and her peers' edits and suggestions; another class assignment and 2 students' responses to it; and transcripts of 2 class exchanges on the Daedalus interchange.) (TB)

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ED 385 847

Using Daedalus Interchange and New Daedalus Write to Teach Audience Awareness, Revision Techniques, and Textual Interpretation in a First Year Writing Course on Contemporary Legal Issues

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Contents

1. Assignment for book review of Sarah Weddington, *A Question of Choice*

2. Liz Matson's book review of *A Question of Choice*

3. Liz Matson's book review, annotated by peer editor Alexis Nussbaum

4. Note to Liz Matson, suggesting revisions, from editor, Alexis Nussbaum

5. Brief homework/writing assignment on "Violent Certainties" (essay), by Verlyn Klinkenborg, *Harper's*, January, 1995,.

6. Gloria Chyou's and Brittany Boisvert's responses to homework/writing assignment on "Violent Certainties"

7. Transcript of Daedalus Interchange on "Violent Certainties"

8. Excerpts, Transcript of Interchange on Mary Ann Glendon, *Abortion and Divorce in Western Law*, pages 1 - 62

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CS214994

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Writing 125 is a thirteen week course which all first year Wellesley students are required to take. The Writing Program is staffed by faculty from all departments who volunteer to teach thematic courses in their area of expertise, as well as by several writing professionals. The class, numbering fifteen students, meets in a classroom equipped with networked computers with access to the college-wide e-mail, bulletin, library catalog, and communications software systems. The computers are arranged around the walls in a U-shape. In addition, in the center, this classroom features a more conventional seminar table setup, with blackboards and projection screens for VCR and computer display in the front of the room. Seventeen computer stations are equipped with the Daedalus software program, which is used not only by Writing Program faculty, but also by faculty from traditional humanities, language, social science and science departments.

My course, Law in Contemporary Society, allows me to draw on my experience as a teacher of writing as well as my work as a lawyer. The readings for the course include landmark United States Supreme Court cases such as *Roe v. Wade* and *Webster v. Cruzan*, as well as excerpts from books and articles on contemporary legal issues such as abortion, assisted suicide, domestic violence, free speech, and divorce.

Often, students in this class have never before been asked to read and think critically about a sophisticated, dense, and often not-so-well-written legal text. Many students have very strong opinions about the controversial topics we approach in this class, but have never been challenged to support their views on these matters. My greatest task as a writing teacher in this course is to assist students first to decipher the texts they will ultimately write about, and then to help them find a subject related to that text, which both interests and challenges them.

Peer review is an essential part of my writing course. Students routinely meet in groups of three to read and edit one another's first versions of formal writing assignments. After students turn in their essays for each writing assignment, the class as a whole critiques anonymous student essays. In this exercise,students receive copies of one or two student papers and we spend forty-five minutes examining and discussing the strengths and shortcomings of the papers, with a particular emphasis on how the papers measure up to the writing assignment. For example, in the second formal writing assignment for this semester's class, students were

asked to write a book review of Sarah Weddington's (lead attorney in the *Roe v. Wade* case) memoir, *A Question of Choice*, and to preface the review with a detailed description of the publication and audience for whom the review was intended. After the class critiqued two student book reviews, I asked them to spend the last 20 minutes of class on New Daedalus Write (the word processing component of the Daedalus software program) writing a detailed but brief memo to one of the book review authors,. Students were to write in the voice of the intended magazine's editor. Such an exercise at the conclusion of a discussion centering on the book reviews helped students focus, memorialize and clarify what they perceived as weaknesses in the student book review.

Daedalus Interchange as an Aid in Critical Interpretation of a Text

Besides using the New Daedalus Write feature to assist students in recording and focusing their responses to a difficult legal text, I often use the Daedalus Interchange feature when students have just completed reading a particularly difficult text. A recent example of this is Verlyn Klinkenborg's long essay, "Violent Certainties," which appears in the January 1995 *Harper's*. This essay, replete with sophisticated metaphors and literary and political allusions, posed a particular challenge for students, despite the fact that they had had already struggled through the labyrinthian *Roe v. Wade* opinion of Justice Harry Blackmun, and had also waded through a sophisticated critique of *Roe* by Mary Ann Glendon, a Harvard law professor who specializes in comparative legal analysis.

To prepare students for the Interchange "discussion" on "Violent Certainties," I asked them to write a short paragraph in which they point o the author's thesis, and give two instances of how he supports his thesis in the essay. Although I began the Interchange by asking students "What did you say Klinkenborg's thesis was in 'Violent Certainties' ?" it becomes clear, when one reads the transcript, that the students soon found their way to a more difficult question, how to decipher and make sense of the metaphors Klinkenborg uses to advance his thesis. On Page 9 of the "Violent Certainties" Interchange discussion, I asked students to leave the discussion, go to New Daedalus Write, and choose one of two questions about this essay to write about for the next fifteen minutes. On this particular day, many students felt they did not have enough time even to write a coherent paragraph on one of the topics, and so arranged to hand in their paragraphs later that day.

I include in the attached materials another example of using Interchange to help students attack a difficult text, the brief excerpts from the Interchange discussion of Mary Ann Glendon, *Abortion and Divorce in Western Law* . This transcript became yet another source for students as they wrote their third essay for the course, on commentators on, or critics4 of, the 1972 *Roe* Supreme Court opinion.

Conclusions

Integrating technology, particularly this combination of e-mail (for distributing writing and homework assignments and providing quick answers to students' writing problems), probing of texts on the Daedalus Interchange feature, and the word processing component of Daedalus for Quick Write assignments, enriches the writing classroom and maximizes the instructor's time and energy,. Students use about three quarters of precious class time writing in response to reading assignments, writing about their peers' writing, or creating their own texts in response to both these sources.

Lynne Spigelmire Viti
Wellesley College
March 25, 1995

From: LUCY::LVITI "Lynne Viti,The Writing Program, Wellesley College" 2
To: @LAW
CC:
Subj: Assignment for Paper # 2: Book Review of *A Question of Choice*

Your Book Review should be 3 to 5 pages long, typed, double spaced. At the beginning of your review, after your name, the course name, instructor's name and date, you should have a short paragraph in which you describe your reading audience for this review, either by naming a publication with which you are familiar and describing common characteristics of the books reviewed in that publication, or, alternatively, by describing the age, reading ability, and level of sophistication your "ideal" or intended reader has, particularly with respect to Roe v. Wade and similar landmark United State Supreme Court cases since 1970.

The Review:

In lieu of a title for your paper, list the book's name, author, publisher, date of publication, whether it is hardcover or paperback, and price.

In your review, provide your reader with as much background information as you feel is necessary in order to orient her (or him) to your subject matter. Try not to assume too much beyond the fact that the reader has probably at least heard of *Roe v. Wade* and knows it was a landmark case of 20+_ years ago on the subject of abortion.

Concentrate on three or four scenes or vignettes in the book which you feel are particularly representative of Weddington's memoir. Don't merely retell these; also comment on them, telling your reader why they are representative of the book's strengths --or weaknesses.

Make a value judgment about the book for your reader; either recommend the book and say why the reader will find it worthwhile to read, or make it clear to your reader why she should not waste her time--and her eleven dollars.

You should give your completed and typed first version of the review to your peer editors by Saturday at noon. Per editors should complete their reading and annotations of the reviews by Sunday, March 5, 7 p.m., and return the annotated versions to their authors. PLEASE SIGN YOUR ANNOTATIONS SO I CAN GIVE YOU CREDIT FOR THEM!

FINAL VERSIONS OF THE BOOK REVIEW, WITH BOTH PEER EDITED COPIES, AND A COVER MEMO FROM YOU TO ME, ARE DUE IN MY MAILBOX BY NOON ON TUESDAY MARCH 7.

THE COVER MEMO:

THIS TIME, THE COVER MEMO IS MORE FORMAL. Please type it, double spaced. List those areas of sentence structure, grammar, style, and usage which you know were weak on your Roe paper, and which you concentrated on improving in this paper. Raise any questions you may have about these areas

N.B. I will hold you responsible for havign viewed the *Revising Prose* videotape available in 124 Founders, and will be focusing on "reducing the lard factor" in your writing as I evaluate and grade these book reviews.

As always, e-mail me or call me if you have questions about writing this paper.

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Liz Matson

Viti - Writing 125L
March 7, 1995

My aim is to target female readers whose ages range from 15 to 20 years. Their reading abilities vary but are not below the level of a junior in high school. This review is targeted at those who are interested in the subject of abortion laws and would read A Question of Choice for pleasure. They probably know few of the details of Roe v. Wade but would be familiar with the outcome of the case. For the most part, they have already formed their opinions on the issue of abortion.

A Question of Choice, by Sarah Weddington.
(Penguin Books, 1993: paperback, $11.00)

While the case Roe v. Wade (1973) is one of the most well known of Supreme Court cases, it is rare for someone to know many of the events that led up to the decision. Even fewer are familiar with the story of the young lawyer who argued the case. Sarah Weddington. Weddington sought to remedy this situation in her memoir The Question of Choice. Not only did she give generous background on her own life and the experiences that led up to Roe v. Wade, she discussed in detail the actual case proceedings in Washington. The information she presented was gripping but overshadowed by her condescending writing style and flagrant emotional manipulation.

The case was born as a Constitutional challenge to a Texas abortion statute. This statue, and many others like it across the country, made abortion virtually illegal. Sarah Weddington was fresh out law school when she brought the case to life, never having argued a contested case before and never imagining that this case would take her to such an astonishing level of judicial power. And

et, despite these immense challenges, she won on behalf of herself, Jane Roe and American women in general.

In her book Weddington sought to make the reader feel comfortable by using language that was simple and informal. The tone was almost conversational, which seemed strange since she was addressing such a sober and sensitive issue. The story that she told was the personal side of Roe v. Wade and that aspect of her book was both interesting and provocative. Somewhere along the line she lost sight of her audience and ended preaching in a way that only served to alienate the reader, whatever side of the abortion question they have take.

About the first half of the book was, although not challenging, engaging. Weddington tells of her life and the struggles she faced that culminated in her devotion to abortion rights activism. Within the first pages of her memoir, Weddington describes her experience with her college women's basketball team in western Texas, McMurry College. There was, in fact, a women's team, but it was considered too arduous for the players to run the full court. Instead each team had a side for offense and a separate one for defense. All were on the court simultaneously and stayed on opposite sides of, passing the ball to each other at half court. When the young Weddington questioned the logic behind such confining rules, they told her that "'Young women must preserve their reproductive capacity; after all it is their meal ticket.'" This comment left Weddington fuming and she swore to herself that her reproductive capacity would not serve as her "meal ticket". It was this tenacity that allowed her to help create the world she wanted to live in.

Examples like this did give important insight into the lives that women of her generation were expected to lead. However, they did not significantly improve her writing style, which left her readers to contend with the exceedingly chatty style that she favored. This sort of background was essential to the understanding of her personal drive for women's right, and more specifically, abortion rights. Such things are hard to imagine for women who grew up in the generations after Sarah Weddington, making the story of the half-court basketball game all the more significant.

B2

Another aspect of her life that lent reality to the readers was Weddington's account of her own abortion. Weddington had become pregnant during her years at law school and the Texas statute forced her to have an illegal abortion in a small Mexican clinic. This experience was something that she felt no women should have to go through, even though she was lucky enough to have found a competent doctor and have had the procedure performed under sanitary conditions. This aspect of her life not only served to reaffirm her feelings about abortion rights but also engaged the interest and sympathy of the reader. While it was clearly necessary to describe her personal experience with abortion, the placement and her analysis of this particular story were blatant emotional hooks for the reader, the idea of which leaves a sour taste in my mouth. This strategy was true throughout her book, leaving Weddington writing smelling propaganda, not an honest and heartfelt description of such an important case.

Weddington then went on to describe how Roe v. Wade affected her life and future. Sadly, the book culminates in a step-by-step guide to pro-choice activism and a current updates on abortion law and controversy. The tone was condescending and childish, leaving the reader defensive about their own views, whether or not the coincide with Weddington's. This chapter serves to exemplify the entire feeling of A Question of Choice, which appears to be Weddington's attempt to reaffirm her own views and describe to others what they should believe about abortion.

Liz Matson

Peer Editor: Alexis Nussbaum

A Question of Choice review

Viti - Writing 125L

March 7, 1995

My aim is to target female readers whose ages range from 15 to 20 years. Their reading abilities vary but are not below the level of a junior in high school. This review is targeted at those who are interested in the subject of abortion laws and would read A Question of Choice for pleasure. They probably know few of the details of Roe v. Wade but would be familiar with the outcome of the case. For the most part, they have already formed their opinions on the issue of abortion.

A Question of Choice, by Sarah Weddington.
(Penguin Books, 1993: paperback, $11.00)

add another sentence at the beginning or try to make the first sentence stronger

While the case Roe v. Wade (1973) is one of the most well known ~~of~~ Supreme Court cases, it is rare for someone to know many of the events that led up to the decision. Even fewer are familiar with the story of the young lawyer who argued the case. Sarah Weddington. Weddington sought to remedy this situation in her memoir, The Question of Choice. Not only did she give generous background on her own life and the experiences that led up to Roe v. Wade, she and wrote a detailed discussion about ~~discussed in detail~~ the actual case proceedings in Washington. The information she presented was gripping, yet ~~but~~ overshadowed by her condescending writing style and flagrant emotional manipulation.

The case was created ~~born~~ as a Constitutional challenge to a Texas abortion statute. ~~This statue, and many others like it across the country, made~~ declaring abortion ~~virtually~~ illegal unless the mother's life was endangered. Sarah Weddington was fresh out law school when she brought the case to life, never previously having ~~before~~ argued a contested case Roe v. Wade ~~this case~~ and never imagining that would take her to such an astonishing level of judicial power. And

CRITIQUE IDEAS

~~- stronger opening statement~~
~~- explain who Jane Roe is~~
~~- combine info, or put 1st + 3rd paragraphs together; put all info. on book together~~
~~- "explain" basketball story~~

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et, despite these immense challenges, she won on behalf of herself, plaintiff Jane Roe and American women in general.

In her book Weddington sought to make the reader feel comfortable by using language that was simple and informal. The tone was almost conversational, which seemed strange since she was addressing such a sober and sensitive issue. The story that she told was ~~the~~ personal ~~side of~~ involvement in Roe v. Wade and that aspect of her book was both interesting and provocative. ~~But~~ somewhere along the line she lost sight of her audience and ended preaching in a way that only served to alienate the reader. ~~whatever~~ whichever side of the abortion question ~~they have take.~~ she agrees with.

~~About~~ The first half of the book was, although not challenging, ~~engaging.~~ engaging Weddington ~~tells~~ told of her life and the struggles she faced that culminated in her devotion to abortion rights activism. Within the first pages of her memoir, Weddington ~~describes~~ described her experience with her college women's basketball team at McMurry College in western Texas. ~~McMurry College.~~ There was, in fact, a women's team, but it was considered too arduous for the players to run the full court. Instead each team had a side for offense and a separate one for defense. All players were on the court simultaneously, ~~and~~ yet stayed on ~~opposite~~ their respective sides ~~of~~ passing the ball to each other at half court. When the young Weddington questioned the logic behind such confining rules, ~~they told her~~ she was told that, "'Young women must preserve their reproductive capacity; after all it is their meal ticket.'" This comment left Weddington fuming and she swore to herself that her reproductive capacity would not serve as her "meal ticket". It was this tenacity that allowed her to help create the world in which she wanted to live ~~in.~~ [ ] explain better what in Weddington's character made her a perfect person to take on a case like Roe?

tack on end of previous paragraph → [Examples like this did give important insight into the lives that women of her generation were expected to lead. However, ~~they~~ such stories did not significantly improve ~~her~~ Weddington's writing style, ~~which left~~ leaving her readers to contend with the exceedingly chatty style that she favored. ~~]~~ [This ~~is~~ was a detailed discussion of ~~background~~ Weddington's background ~~was~~ IS essential to the understanding of her personal drive for women's rights, and more specifically, abortion rights. ~~Such things~~ Restrictions on such personal freedoms are hard to imagine for women who grew up in the generations after Sarah Weddington, making the story of the half-court basketball game all the more significant. → why does this make the story more significant?

it doesn't like what Weddington's EXPLAIN

(strong beliefs, persistance, etc.)

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Another ~~aspect~~ chapter of ~~her~~ Weddington's life that ~~lent reality to the readers~~ added realism to A Question of Choice was ~~Weddington's~~ her account of her own abortion. Weddington had become pregnant during her years at law school and the Texas statute forced ~~her~~ her to have an illegal abortion in a small Mexican clinic. ~~This experience was something that she felt no women should have to go through.~~ Even though she was lucky ~~enough~~ to have found a competent doctor and have had the procedure performed under sanitary conditions, ^ This ~~aspect of~~ portion of her life not only served to reaffirm her feelings about abortion rights but also engaged the interest and sympathy of the reader. While it was clearly necessary to describe her personal experience with abortion, the placement and her analysis of this particular story were blatant emotional hooks for the reader, the idea of which leaves a sour taste in my mouth. This strategy was true throughout her book, leaving Weddington writing smelling propaganda, not ~~an~~ honest and heartfelt description of such an important case.

abortion did not allow her to have an abortion in her home state. She was she knew that most women were not so lucky and she developed the firm belief that no woman should have to go through an illegal abortion.

Weddington then went on to describe how Roe v. Wade affected her life and future. Sadly, the book culminates in a step-by-step guide to pro-choice activism and a current updates on abortion law and controversy. ~~The~~ Weddington's tone was condescending and childish, leaving the reader defensive about ~~their~~ her own views, whether or not ~~the~~ they coincide with Weddington's. This final chapter serves to exemplify the entire feeling of A Question of Choice, which appears to be Weddington's attempt to reaffirm her own views and describe to others ~~what~~ how they should ~~believe~~ feel about abortion.

* write a brief memo (4-5 sentences to the author of the second review suggesting problem areas and specific revision strategies). Write in voice of editor at the magazine she chose in her reader profile.

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Alexis Nussbaum
3/16/95

Book Review Memo

Your review of Sarah Weddington's A Question of choice is excellent. but I have several suggestions for further improvement. It would be beneficial to add a sentence at the beginning of the review that draws readers to your writing. before launching into the book's purpose. It would be useful to inform the reader of who Jane Roe is. possibly in the initial description of Roe v. Wade in the first paragraph. before commenting that she won her legal battle.

In order to create a smoother flow of information. it would be helpful to place the information in the first and third paragraphs together. and then combine the details of Weddington's story. I really like the inclusion of Weddington's feelings about women's basketball. but explain to the reader. what characteristics she possesses that make her the perfect person to tackle a case like Roe v. Wade. (strong beliefs. [persistence. etc.) and how they shine through in the story. You might also describe the pitfalls you see in Weddington's writing style. and back your remarks with examples from the book.

From: LUCY::LVITI "Lynne Viti,The Writing Program, Wellesley College"
To: @LAW
CC:
Subj: Writing 125 L brief assignment for Wednesday 3/15

Write one to three sentences responding to the following questions:

1. What is Klinkenborg's thesis in "Violent Certainties"? If you can point to a single sentence which really embodies his thesis, quote it.

2. Can you point out TWO instances of how Klinkenborg supports his thesis in the essay?

You may work on this alone or with one other person in the class.

This, and the Glendon writings you have done so far, will eventually be part of a longer paper you will do on Roe and opposing or critical views of the Roe decision and its aftermath.

C Brittany Boisvert
Writing 125L
Professor Viti
March 15, 1995

Victor Klinkenborg's article "Violent Certainties" (Harper's, January 1995) presents the problems associated with the abortion "wars" that were not solved by the1973 decision of Roe v. Wade. Klinkenborg vividly describes the warfare used on both sides of the issue. One example is the "duck blind" in the Wisconsin Women's Health care Center. "[He] looked through the lens of the still camera [behind the duck blind]. It was pointed across the parking lot and was focused on three or four men and women standing on the sidewalk.... The people...were dressed in the nondescript way of winter. They moved slowly, as if the air had begun to gel around them.... [He] ...could see...a band of persons standing near the entrance to the building. they were dressed in much the same way as the people on the sidewalk, but they wore green bibs [that] identified them as clinic defenders and escorts." (pg. 39) This vignette is similar to looking down on a battle field at the two opposing sides waiting to attack. When the patient arrives, the onslaught begins. "...they'd [the anti-abotionists] see a female come in the lot, and five, ten of them would run up right in front of the fron and back door and then another three or four would just attack the car and start yelling at the patient through the windows, screaming, stuffing pamphlets through the windows." (pg.40)

Gloria Chyou
15 March 1995

In "Violent Certainties", Verlyn Klinkenborg describes the powerlessness of Roe v. Wade by analyzing his search for his stand on abortion. Throughout his essay, Klinkenborg paints the picture of the war between pro-choice advocates and the anti-abortion movement. Klinkenborg sees this war as the main dilemma of the abortion issue. The reader can see one part of this dilemma as Klinkenborg describes the frenzy and zealotry of of the anti-abortion movement. The reader can empathize with Klinkenborg's struggle when he says, "I realized then how hard it is to preserve some balance between the dictates of faith and the dictates of social reason, to disapprove of abortion and call yourself a Christian and at the same time separate yourself from the anti-abortion extremists" (43). He continues to describe people and experiences from both sides of the issue. He can undertand and relate to feelings of both the pro-choice advocates and the anti-abortion movement. From his search, he discovers that "there is a tendency in the United States to admire strength of belief as a positive value in itself, without considering the content of belief"(51-52). Each side not only fights for what they believe is right, but goes to such an extent as to create physical war. Abortion is no longer just an issue that can be resolved with a simple court case, but one that stirs great emotions resulting in a war that causes hatred, shame, and guilt.

to do what? undeen — complete the thought.

give an example of how he does this

interesting quotation — but what does this mean?

?

I didn't see this

look up this word — you aren't using it correctly!

Writing 125L
Interchange/ "Violent Certainties" by Verlyn Klinkenborg 3/15/95

What did you say Klinkenborg's thesis was in "Violent Certainties'? Let's spend about 15 minutes discussing this before you write on this topic in New Daedalus Write.

Alexis Nussbaum:
Despite the determined and often graphic methods of the anti-abortion movement, the idea that someone believes that he or she has the right to control your body remains the most profound fear.

Carolyn Osterwalder:
Klinkenborg's thesis appears to be that "there is a tendency in the United States to admire strength of belief as a positive value in itself, without considering the content of belief."

Lynne Viti:
Alexis--remains whose fear? Not clear to me.

Gloria Chyou:
I think that Klinkenborg's thesis encompasses the idea that women are feeling a lot of guilt in making their choice to have an abortion and this is because people are trying to force certain beliefs on others.

Brittany Boisvert:
I thought Klinkenborg's thesis was stated in one of the first few sentences:
"...it's also a landscape that hasn't relinquished it's almost allegorical power to express guilt about abortion in a country where, legally speaking, guilt is no longer necessary." He brings up an important point that even though women legally have the right to an abortion, many women are being "forced" into underground clinics because of the guilt and shame placed upon them by anti-abortion factions.

Christina Bresani:
Klinkenborg's article is a documentation of his own search to discover where he stands on the abortion issue. After visiting various Wisconsin abortion clinics and talking with both pro-choice and anti-abortion advocates, he comes to the conclusion that it is impossible "for anyone to presume to control the biological activity, the autonomous body, of another person agaist that person's will." (p. 48)

Liz Matson:
Abortion is no longer just a medical procedure, but rather abortion has become a battle ground, with each side arming itself with what they see as their most powerful weapons.

Lynne Viti:
Did anyone see the writer's thesis (Let's call him VK for want of a shorter monniker) as greater, broader than one concerned with the contest between those who believe abortion should be safe , legal and available, and those who believe it is murder?

Rakhee Palekar:
I thougth that the last paragraph of the article summarized the thesis well...
""no one in the parking lot pretends that having to make your own decisions is a source fo relief. But the relief of having someone else make them for you vanishes quickly, leaving the taste of ashes in your mouth."

Vicki Kalb:
Klinkenborg's article presents a dilemma many people feel about abortion. He finds it hard to reconcile the beliefs of the two camps - pro-choice and the violent extremist fringe, and the guilt that many women feel when going to have an abortion; an emotion brought on by the lunatic fringe.

Kate Bower:
I agree with gloria. I thought that Klinkenborg's report focused a lot on the "allogorical power to express guilt about abortion in a country where, legally speaking, guilt is no longer necessary."

Lynne Viti:
Carolyn--say more about this. How does the sentence you quoted relate to the abortion wars?

Amy Stapleton:
I felt Klinkenborg's thesis was centered on the idea that the pro-choice side is not interested in promoting abortion,they believe instead in making it safe for a woman if she chooses to have an abortion.

Lynne Viti:
Gloria--that seems to be only one part of VK's article.

Jennifer Kelly:

I thought that the thesis was th third sentence in the first paragraph- "But it's also a landscape that hasn't relinquished its almost allegorical power to express guilt about abortion in a country where, legally speaking, guilt is no longer necessary."

Alexis Nussbaum:
. . . the fear pertains to women in a democratic country where personal rights and freedoms are highly valued.

Helen Alva:
I think that Klinkenborg's thesis was stated in just one sentence. He worked his way by begining his essay saying that there are two main landscapes of abortion: Roe v. Wade and the anti-abortion movement and their active protests. Finally, at the end of his opening, he states: "I did not understand that the battle of abortion in Milwaukee had largely been a battle to control this parking lot, nor did I understand the real shape of the battle or who the adversaries really were."

Molly Colvin:
I thought that Klinkenborg's thesis was that anti-abortion protesters have become so extreme and radical that they have lost sight of the real issues surrounding abortion, such as the prevention of pregnancy and obtaining good health care for all of society. Near the end of the article, he says that looking back on all that he has seen, he doesn't remember the individuals involved in the actual act of abortion but remembers the parking lot where "abotion is only a pretext".

Lynne Viti:
Brittany-it seems to me that the author suggests, through the story of Chloe, that some women have a degree of guilt over having the procedure for reasons other than those connected to the pro-life protesters. Why all the discussion about failed (or non-existent) birth controlmethods used by the women who sought abortions in Liz Karlin's clinic?

Melody Yam:
I said the thesis was that women are confronted with two major obstacles before having an abortion: there exists an internal and an external conflict. Once they fight their way past the protesters, they

have to overcome the guilt and shame they feel. "...the crowd outside brandishes the weapons of righteousness and the women inside bear the weight of their choice."

Lynne Viti:
Christina! Good point. Can you answer in a single sentence(or can anyone in this class) for me whether VK finally determines his own position on abortion? Does he come right out and say what his position is? If not, how does the reader learn of it?

Kate Bower:
VK's experience at the clinics was really interesting especially when he compares seeing an actual fetus and then seeing the signs of anti-abortion protestors which had pictures of fetus's that were a lot older than the one that he saw.

Helen Alva:
A correction from my previous statement....I meant to say that I don't think VK stated his thesis in one sentence.

Lynne Viti:
Rahkee--you have quoted an interesting passage, certainly one iwth a compelling metaphor. But now tell us what you believe the metaphor means. Take it apart for us and tell us how it works at the conclusion ofi this essay.

Vicki Kalb:
I think it is important to consider the aspect of failed birth control methods. In England, for example, oral contraceptives are free. There are hardly any instances of women simply letting their prescriptions run out. In the US, costs for the pill can run as high as $30 *per month*, and I don't find it surprising that many women let their prescriptions run out. The same is true for many other forms of birth control.

Carolyn Osterwalder:
I think what Klinkenborg said about Americans admiring strength of belief without thinking about what exactly it is they are believing is very applicable to both sides of the abortion debate. The pro-life people believe so strongly in "saving lives" that they may forget that they are encouraging violence, intimidation, etc. On the other hand, the pro-choice

people believe so strongly in their "right" to have an abortion that they may forget that an abortion results in the remains of a tiny, human foot in a medical dish (this was clearly very moving to VK).

Lynne Viti:
Vicki--I disagree to an extent. Cannot a woman seeking an abortion feel guilt even without clinic protesters outside? Women who had abortions twenty years ago, before the "pro-life" movement really mobilized, felt guilt in some instances. Guilt is not merely an emotion brought on by dmeosntrators. I think VK suggests it has many other sources as well, though perhaps not as confrontational.

What other sources can you (the class) think of which might produce this guilt?.

Christina Bresani:
Throughout the article I was not quite clear what VK's stance on abortion was, but in the last few pages he comes right out and says that women should have the right to choose. He says, "the sense that someone else believes he has the right to control your body to force the alienation of your own womb" is the most profound fear for women. (p. 48)

Amy Stapleton:
I think VK discussed the birth control methods used by these women because it gave them something to blame. Many women felt that they should have been more conscientous when it came to using birth control. I think he is using this scene as a statement about the U.S. I think he is exposing a lack of sex education as well as poor health care.

Kate Bower:
It seemed as if VK wasn't exactly for abortion but wasn't against it either. After he saw what the younger fetus looked like he saw no corrolation between it and a person but when he saw the older fetus and recognized some of the body parts it changed his tone of voice about the procedures.

Lynne Viti:
Alexis--I'm still not clear. Who is afraid?
What do the people who are afraid fear?
What is the source of their fears?

Molly Colvin:
I felt that VK never reconciles where he stands on abortion but said that the issue was no longer really abortion. The debate over abortion has become so blown out of proportion that nobody really knows what's going on. VK obviously believes that abortion should be considered as an option; he said that he had known two women whom "he made pregnant" that had had abortions. He also has some discomfort over where to draw the line for abortion because he felt guilty when he distinguished the hand of an aborted fetus of 16 weeks.

Lynne Viti:
Kate, you have touched upon one of the more trobuling parts of this essay. HHow did you--I direct this query to everyone in this class-- react when VK talked about the two fetuses--the one which was unrecognizable as a human being, and the one with a tiny hand no bigger than a question mark on the page?

Jennifer Kelly:
I agree with what Carolyn said about Americans fimly believing in something without really knowing what they are believing or what affect it has is true. There are instances where both sides of the abortion issue go to extremes because both are so intent on their own beliefs. They don't consider anything else.

Vicki Kalb:
I think that choosing to have an abortion will be a difficult decision on its own - without *any* outside considerations at all. However, to be confronted outside a clinic by abortion protesters who are putting voice to those fears makes the situation all the more difficult.

Rakhee Palekar:
melody makes an interesting point, in this article, the women were seen as
having to deal with the initial external confict- with the protesters and then with the guilt they feel for having an abortion....vk doesnt come out and
state his postion on abortion, but he acknowledges that there should be a choice

Carolyn Osterwalder:
I think VK's position on abortion is similar to the position that probably a majority of Americans have--they are not truly comfortable with either side. They may want to keep abortion legal, but the idea of what an abortion actually does may make them uncomfortable.

Melody Yam:
Carolyn:
The tiny hand in the medical dish also hit me pretty hard. I never really thought about this. I guess it was always easier and a lot more impersonal to think about an extremely early abortion, when the fetus was just a "a tiny quantity of bright blood streaking an uncongealed white membrane".

Jennifer Kelly:
Yes, I agree too that guilt is not just brough on by others telling you to feel guilty. I'm sure that most women feel guilty about abortion on their own.
Perhaps the guilt of thinking about what may have become of the child hd it been born is something alot of women think about.

Helen Alva:
I think it is interesting how there abortion clinics in Milwaukee have seperate parking lots. I'm not quite sure how to interpret the parking lot. VK says near the end of his essay that "the parking lot is a battle to protect an open space, and abortion is only the pretext." Does this mean that anti-abortion activists are only targeting abortion because this is the only issue they can find to protest?

Molly Colvin:
I think that women are already experiencing a great deal of guilt before they are even confronted with the protesters outside the clinic. The protesters merely augment whatever they are feeling. The biggest source of guilt is probably internal. We are raised with all of these beliefs that one day you will get married and have kids and everything will be great. You are a tainted person if you don't follow these rules. The guilt comes from the fact that you didn't live up to these expectations of society that you have internalized.

Amy Stapleton:
I think VK definately felt that a woman should have the right to choose-he actually goes so far as to state this. However, he was clearly very moved by the fetus in the medical dish. I think that he was trying to say that even though women should have the right to choose, it is important to recognize that it is a decision that interferes with what he described as "a human continuum." In other words,I don't think he was ever very comfotable with the women he knew deciding to have an abortion,but he still supports their right to choose.

Gloria Chyou:
No one ever *wants* to have an abortion. Usually, when people decide to have an abortion, they feel like they have no other choice. I think that this causes some guilt, for example, guilt from irresponsibility. Other times, they feel forced to have an abortion because of family or friends. They feel that they are a source of shame to the family. Abortion may be a right of choice, but I feel that society is not promoting all possible choices...choices that need to be made before needing to make a choice of abortion.

Brittany Boisvert:
I think many Americans could classify themselves as both pro-life and pro-choice. since many supporters on both sides are so radical, we tend to forget about those who feel that, for themselves, abortion would never be an option except in cases of rape, incest, possible death, deformity, etc., but when it comes to other women in completely different circumstances, abortion needs to be a choice. There also comes the feeling for both men and women that they don't want the government telling them what to do with their bodies and personal healthcare.

Kate Bower:
The description of the two fetus's really made me think about when we can define human life and how. If the fetus has already taken shape, does that mean it's a "human" and should have rights or does the viable factor still play into this?

Ada Liu:
Throughout the article I was not quite sure what VK's stance was but towards the end he makes it a little more clear. He makes it more clear on pg. 48 when he states that he doesn't think that anyone has the right to

control the biological activity of a person against that person's will. His last sentence also states his stance "But the relief of having someone else make them for you vanishes quickly, leaving the taste of ashes in your mouth." I am still not quite sure whether he is definitely pro-choice or pro-life but I think he is against someone making decisions for you over your body.

Alexis Nussbaum:
There is an overwhelming fear felt by women, particularily in the democratic United States, that an outside source, such as the government or complete strangers, could control something as personal as one's body. The fear is heightened when it is considered that this outside source may see this control as only a legislative tactic and not the invasion of a woman's personal space.

Carolyn Osterwalder:
Yes, I felt there was a difference in my reaction to the first fetus which was just a membrane, and the second one where VK could see the hand and the foot. The first one does not really elicit guilt, because you cannot actually see what can become human, but in the second one you can.

Lynne Viti:
,I would like everyone to leave Interchange now (I will compact it and have transcripts printed out) and go to New Daedalus Write. Here are the questions: choose one:

1. Klinenborg writes, metaphorically, about two landscapes of abortion. What are these two landscapes? How does this metaphor work (or not work) to advance Klinkenborg's thesis? What IS his thesis in this essay? Use two quotations, either phrases or sentences, from "Violent Certainties" to illustrate your argument.

2. Is this essay about the writer and his beliefs and feelings about abortion, is it about law and politics in America, or is it about the power or powerlessness of the Roe decision to solve the "abortion problem"? Using at least two quuotations from the essay (cite to the page, please), discuss these questions.

Melody Yam:
Protesters just don't realize the courage and strength it takes to admit

that one is unable to care for another life.

Molly Colvin:
There were two things that really struck me about this article. The first was the detailed description of Chloe's abortion that was written as a dialogue. The second was the hand in the medical dish. It amazed me that there could be such a difference and I immediately thought, "why is abortion legal at a stage when body parts are distinguishable?" I had no problem with the "uncongealed mass" but the hand really got me.

Liz Matson:
This guilt that Molly talks about is inherent to the abortion process. I would imagine that this guilt is also the most powerful safe guard to having abortion become a common place occurence.

Christina Bresani:
The description of the fetuses in the dish was disturbing. I almost didn't want to read it because I didn't want to know (ignorance is bliss). Like VK, it made me think about human life and what an abortion really does.

Jennifer Kelly:
I agree with what Molly said about not living up to peole's expectations- being married, having kids, etc. I think this can apply to many situations, but for abortion in particular, this is somethin people think about.

Helen Alva:
On page 45 VK comments on the decision to have an abortion and why the decision is never quite absolute. Pregnancy brings with it an enourmous life change and it is impossible to not think of the "what could have been." In terms of guilt, he comments that Americans are dishonest about sex. And it is true. It seems as if it is tabboo to dicsuss sex at any time, even for educational purposes.

Interchange on Mary Ann Glendon
Abortion & Divorce in Western Law
3/6/95

Lynne Viti:
Directions:
Among your gorup, decide which paragrph you will concentrate on as a group.
Next, each member revises independently using the New Daedalus WRITE feature.
Finally, choose Turn in a Document from the UTILITIES MENU and each group member views the other two revisions and
the Group decides which revision it likes best.

Vicki Kalb:
I found Glendon's comparisons very helpful because I didn't know how American laws compared to Western European laws. I was quite surprised to find that they are more liberal.

Lynne Viti:
If any of you have already read the Verlyn Klnkenborg article in Harper's ("Violent Certainties") as well as the Glendon, you may have been troubled by some of the issues Klinkenborg raises which shake your previously held beliefs about abortion.
Helen acknolwewgded yesterday on our Bulletin that Glendon views the abortion issue in a different light than she (Helen) had raised in her Roe paper . As most of you acknowledged when I asked you which paper was more difficult to write, the first paper was really more or less a restatement and explication of Blackmun's opinion in Roe. Not many of us really critiqued the opinion at length other than to say the viability concept contains built-in weaknesses.

Brittany Boisvert:
I agree with Vicki that it was very surprising that the European laws were more liberal than ours, but I was often confused. I found it difficult to figure out what country she was talking about, which country she was comparing it to, and what time period she was discussing. Usually I had to go back and read pages over again to be able to follow what she was talking about.

Lynne Viti:
Vkci--what do you mean when you write "they "in your IC comment? Does "they" refer to American laws?

Molly Colvin:
The thing that shocked me the most about reading Glendon was the idea that there could be a compromise between pro-choice and pro-life. I had never really thought that the two issues were reconcilable even though I can't say that I wholly agree with either side.

Amy Stapleton:
I found myself agreeing with a lot of what Glendon said. I think it is very important for the U.S. to look at how other countries have been able to compromise on the issue of abortion.

Molly Colvin:
The thing that shocked me the most about reading Glendon was the idea that there could be a compromise between pro-choice and pro-life. I had never really thought that the two issues were reconcilable even though I can't say that I wholly agree with either side.

Jennifer Kelly:
I agree with Vicki. I was quite surprised at the fact that American laws are more liberal. I think this was posted somewhere on our class bulletin too.

Vicki Kalb:
yes - I meant that American laws are more liberal

Christina Bresani:
I have always thought that roe was a very positive legal decision for the United States. However, it was very interesting to listen to the other side of the argument. It did bother me a little, though, to hear her say that the rights of a community or state should come before a woman's right to choose what to do with her body.

Helen Alva:
I think that Glendon has a very interesting argument. I wasn't necessarily surprised about abortion laws in European countries because they seem to have other issues right. For example, health care is a big part of their abortion laws. Sex education and the availabilities of birth control are parts of their abortion laws as well. I think that the main difference between European abortion laws and U.S. abortion laws is that they accept that abortion is a moral issue and deal with it. We don't by finding